DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 125 642 95 IR 003 732

AUTHOR	Mojkowski, Charles; Picogna, Joseph
TITLE	Building a Dissemination Capacity in New Jersey.
INSTITUTION	Rhode Island State Dept. of Education, Providence. Education Information Center.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jun 76
NOTE	27p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Delivery Systems; *Information Dissemination; Information Needs; *Information Systems; Models; *Organization; Program Evaluation; *State Departments of Education; Statewide Planning
IDENTIFIERS	Interstate Project on Dissemination; *New Jersey

ABSTRACT

In New Jersey the Interstate Project on Dissemination (IPOD) has formed the basis for the identification of existing and needed dissemination activities and resources and has facilitated their integration into a State Education Agency (SEA) system responsive to practitioners at the local school district level. By establishing a comprehensive dissemination planning capability and conducting an agencywide analysis, the New Jersey Department of Education has accomplished the following: (1) assessed the characteristics of current SEA dissemination activities; (2) developed a communication system within the SEA whereby key agents or units can share and plan dissemination activities and resources; (3) developed a dissemination model; (4) identified implementation strategies for the dissemination model; and (5) evaluated the products and services of the current dissemination component. (Author/EMH)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED125642

BUILDING A DISSEMINATION CAPACITY IN NEW JERSEY

By
Charles Mojkowski
Joseph Picogna

June, 1976

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

IR 003 732

The analysis reported herein was supported in part by a grant from the National Institute of Education, United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Grantees undertaking such projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent positions or policies of the National Institute of Education.

BUILDING A DISSEMINATION CAPACITY IN NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCTION

One of the major efforts of state education agencies (SEA's) that is being given increased attention of late is that relating to enhancing the capacity of school personnel to seek and use knowledge as part of a rational process for improving education. This promotion of knowledge utilization (KU) is part of a larger concept referred to as knowledge production and utilization (KPU). Activities directed toward increased knowledge utilization have been categorized as dissemination or diffusion, both terms being used interchangeably by practitioners and researchers alike. Recent efforts at tightening up the conceptualization of such activities have more or less settled on the term dissemination as more applicable to the wide range of activities addressing KU.[1]

A history of the conduct of dissemination activities in SEA's would record a most diverse development. In general, however, such development has been characterized by the following:

- dissemination activities initiated by one or two federally funded programs
- dissemination activities viewed as isolated program activities
- dissemination activities largely focused on one-way communications from the SEA to the client

[1] Interstate Project on Dissemination (IPOD), Report and Recommendations (Raleigh, North Carolina, 1976), page 53.

- lack of adequately trained dissemination personnel
- relatively low level of resources committed to dissemination activities
- lack of any comprehensive plan for dissemination

While these generalizations were true of almost all SEA's up until the late 1960's, it is not true of a growing number of states at present. Several SEA's have undertaken the development and implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated dissemination capacity. Before looking at the elements of that capacity, it is necessary to define more explicitly the concept of dissemination.

Within the broadened perspective of knowledge utilization, dissemination is defined as a process for:

a) communicating educational needs, problems, solutions, and information among educational practitioners, decision-makers and knowledge producers; and

b) facilitating rational consideration and the appropriate utilization of the outcomes of research, development, effective educational practice, and other knowledge that can be used for the improvement of education (IPOD, 1976).

Several elements of this definition merit special emphasis particularly as they relate to the dissemination system within an SEA.

1. Two-way communication process - a dissemination system must allow for and facilitate information flow from local educators to state agency personnel and beyond to the research and development community as well as for the more typical flow from the state to the

local level. It must also facilitate communication among LEA's.

2. Communicating needs and problems - an important element of an SEA dissemination system is a needs sensing mechanism whereby the priority educational needs of the LEA's are identified.

3. Facilitating consideration and utilization - dissemination involves more than telling; it involves a wide range of communication and technical assistance activities such as consultative services, demonstration and training.

4. Effective educational practice - the products of the practitioner community comprise a part of what is communicated; their usefulness and effectiveness may be equal to the products of the research and development community.

5. Improving education - from an SEA perspective, a major part of improving education is assisting local school districts in building capacity for information seeking and utilization and, on a broader scale, for self-renewal.

Four levels of dissemination are implied in this broad definition. The first is the traditional one-way communication of information from source to client. This level is typified by the use of brochures, newsletters, radio, television and similar techniques. The second level involves multiple path communication in which information moves both ways along the channel linking the SEA and its clients and also moves both ways along myriad channels among

all individuals and groups. Such dissemination activities as conferences, workshops and demonstrations are forms of multiple path communication.

These first two levels have been viewed as exhausting the concept of dissemination as more narrowly conceived --the propagation, dispersal or exchange of information. As the meanings given to the term have broadened, two other levels may be perceived. These levels relate directly to the intent that Congress, and the several federal and state education agencies, appear to have in mind when they use the term --the utilization of such information for change and improvement in the operating system.

Thus, a third level of dissemination can be termed "choice-facilitating" in that its purpose is to promote utilization decisions (adoption/adaptations) by educators of alternative programs, practices and ideas which address their needs. The most significant of such efforts is the National Diffusion Network.

The fourth level of dissemination, one which appears to overlap with other concepts, may be called assistance insofar as it involves the provision of help to the client in the utilization of information. Such assistance usually takes the form of personalized consultant assistance directed toward implementation of a program or practice.

Given such a conception of dissemination, a stronger interface between the function and the developing service role of SEA's appears possible. The locus of meaningful change resides in the local school district. The SEA, in serving school districts must employ a system which addresses all levels of dissemination, thus facilitating knowledge utilization for change and improvement.

The capacity for knowledge utilization is perhaps too broad a concept to

serve as an illustration of the role of dissemination (and of an SEA dissemination system) in the process of improvement. More specifically, this capacity has been defined in the context of processes which promote effective and efficient management of the local school system and lead to improved student learning. The interface of the SEA dissemination system and these processes is found in the programs and activities which an SEA implements in order to help local districts conduct such processes. The SEA assists the development of such capacities through distribution of guidelines, through workshops, training, conferences, through technical assistance and monetary resources. At the base of all these services is information in the form of program and practice descriptions, synopses of research and literature, curriculum materials and products and statistical and management data.

The context for the dissemination system can be further understood through an examination of the process whereby the SEA responds to the LEA which is seeking assistance in addressing identified needs. The process is activated by a search for alternative programs or practices which may be used to meet an identified need in the LEA. Within the SEA all sources of program information are screened for appropriate alternatives (potential solutions to identified needs). If such alternatives are found, the dissemination system is employed to communicate this information to the LEA and assist in implementation. If no appropriate alternatives are found, funds are sought in order that a solution be developed. This development process is usually referred to as R&D and can be supported by both state and federal funds. During and following development of the program or practice, evaluation is conducted. Following successful implementation, documentation and validation is established in order that the program be

entered into an information bank for future use.

It appears that SEA's are beginning to recognize the necessity for a comprehensive plan in order to develop an adequate dissemination capacity. In developing an agency-wide plan for dissemination, it is essential that an agency use a comprehensive and open system of planning to insure the efficient and effective use of always limited resources in addressing the needs of its clients. The rationale for such a requirement is based on a configurational perspective of educational KPU. Such a perspective proposes that because the interests of the educational community are diverse, a planning and communication process must be developed which honors these diverse interests in the development of policies and strategies for knowledge utilization.

At the federal level, the National Institute of Education (NIE) has recognized the need for SEA's to develop a comprehensive dissemination capacity and has provided incentives for such development. Their program is based on the rationale that the SEA is "a critical element in national dissemination efforts". Specifically, "the State is the agency that is legally responsible for education in the United States" and "States are unique in their ability to allocate a range of resources for regulation, finance and leadership in education".[1]

The NIE capacity building effort is directed to the development of both a comprehensive and generalized dissemination system. Comprehensive is defined as "the leadership and service capability to provide information and technical assistance in the solution of problems identified by the dissemination agency or

---

[1]National Institute of Education, State Dissemination Grants Program: Program Description Summary (Washington, DC, 1975), page 4.

its clientele". Generalized capacity requires that access be provided "to all information resources for all educators regardless of subject field or role. There should be no limitation as to topic or area of inquiry".[1]

Given such federal incentives and the natural evolution of SEA's to leadership and service in dissemination, there is a need for a framework in which to plan and develop such a comprehensive and generalized dissemination capacity in SEA's. During 1975, supported by a grant from the NIE, such a planning framework was designed by the Interstate Project on Dissemination (IPOD). IPOD was composed of representatives from seven SEA's which were in the process of developing dissemination systems.[2]

The framework developed by IPOD has as its context SEA relationships with local school districts. Rather than develop a model or series of models of dissemination systems, the framework presents an SEA dissemination system as having four components: information, linkage, incentives, and management.

The information component includes those activities which deal with knowledge, facts, or data that exist in a form which facilitates communication. Specific products range from resource guides and program descriptions to newsletters, statistical reports, and public information.

The linkage component includes all activities which relate to a two-way communication or intermediary system or network which links or provides the clients or the SEA with information and incentives. Mass media, conferences, intermediate agencies and consultants are forms of linkages.

---

[1]Ibid., page 11.

[2]The seven states are: Kentucky, Montana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon Rhode Island, Texas.

The incentives component involves those activities which can be used to motivate or impel the clients of the SEA to implement a specific program or practice or to use knowledge for meeting educational objectives. Reward, recommendation, recognition, certification, accreditation, money, law and policy are examples of incentives.

The management component includes those SEA activities which are directed to the organization, control, and utilization of the other components of the dissemination system. While the establishment of the three other components is a necessary first step in the creation of the dissemination, it is the implementation of the management process which is most crucial to the success of the entire system. Without a coordinating and guiding mechanism, the separate activities are seldom integrated and directed toward common priority objectives.

The value of the planning framework is to be found in its utility to SEA personnel who are attempting to analyze and categorize an agency's dissemination activities and resources and organize them more coherently. One of the earliest such uses of the framework is that undertaken by the New Jersey Department of Education. Subsequent sections of this paper discuss the planning process used by that agency in developing a comprehensive and generalized dissemination capacity.

DESIGNING A DISSEMINATION SYSTEM

The New Jersey State Education Agency was typical of most SEA's in its conduct of dissemination activities. Federal and state categorical programs, divisions, bureaus and units were scattered throughout the agency. Because of agency size, communication among these components was meager, particularly

in terms of day-to-day administration. Running parallel to this system were several units which provide a wide range of curriculum and program development services; information and technical assistance services are provided to LEA's by these units.

Because of the complexity of the SEA, a practitioner in an LEA might seek assistance for the development of a reading program, for example, from several different sources in the agency. Such programs might be funded by the SEA under ESEA Title I, ESEA Title III-IV, Urban Education, Vocational Education or Right to Read. Program development assistance might be provided by personnel in any of these units as well as by the reading consultants in the curriculum and instruction unit. And, despite the variety of personnel serving very similar client needs, there was very little communication or coordination among the several units.

While the state education agency has the ultimate responsibility to provide services needed to improve educational processes at the local level, there are several levels of activity that an SEA must accommodate to address this mandate effectively. Before one can conceive of an increased capacity of these agency units for communicating knowledge relevant to educational needs to educational decision makers and practitioners at the local level, the SEA must develop a comprehensive system both to ensure an adequate information base and to manage the allocation of dissemination and program development resources.

The development of the dissemination planning framework provided senior SEA staff with a template by which dissemination resources could be analyzed and organized more effectively. This problem was particularly acute because of the mandate of the State legislature to establish a "thorough and efficient" system

of public education to provide all children in New Jersey, regardless of socio-economic status or geographic location, the educational opportunity which will prepare them to function politically, economically, and socially in a democratic society. Basically the law requires each local education agency to develop an educational process plan, including outcome and process goals, in terms of educational aspiration for learner achievement. These goals must be determined with maximum citizen involvement and must include a definition of performance indicators and standards necessary to indicate achievement of these goals and objectives; a monitoring of the local system and the provision of corrective action where necessary to ensure adequate progress toward the achievement of the goals and objectives particular to the local education agency. The accompanying needs assessment is employed to identify "gaps" in the performance of local education programs, and the SEA must build a capacity to ameliorate these deficiencies, by providing on-site technical assistance to LEA's.

It was recognized that the scope of a problem of dissemination capacity building covers the entire community of local education agencies and that it was necessary for an agency to adopt a program of generalized dissemination capacity in which the SEA provides access to all information resources for all educators regardless of subject field or role.

Early in 1975, the Chief State School Officer established an SEA dissemination task force charged with problem articulation, the formulation and identification of alternative policies regarding dissemination programs and strategies, the evaluation of alternative policies, and the suggested mobilization and consolidation of resources behind chosen policies. The task force is composed of twenty-two members of the department, chaired by the Assistant Commissioner of Research,

Planning and Evaluation, and serves as a macro-planning unit to provide greater communication among those SEA units providing technical assistance to LEA's under the school improvement program. Figure 1 illustrates the composition of the task force.

The first major activity of the task force was the conduct of a systems analysis across all units and programs conducting dissemination activities. This analysis served as an identification of the resources and activities categorized in the IPOD framework under the three components of information, linkage, and incentives. Management resources and activities were also identified. Table I presents the major categories of information collected. The analysis served two purposes: 1) the assessment enabled program managers to determine the comprehensiveness of dissemination activities for each product or program; and 2) the compilation of information across all programs enabled the task force to construct a matrix of the major programs and products disseminated by the New Jersey State Education Agency.

The initial data collected in New Jersey as a result of this process was quite revealing. The majority of respondents reported that mass mailings were the predominant dissemination strategy employed by the agency, 20% of the programs restricted their dissemination activities to "successful" programs; 30% utilized ERIC or assorted canned data bases exclusively; 70% of respondents employed personal contact with LEA's including strategies such as workshops; 80% conducted awareness activities (orientations for target audiences); 65% employed awareness and involvement activities (participation of selected audiences i.e., training and development).

Figure 1

SEA DISSEMINATION TASK FORCE

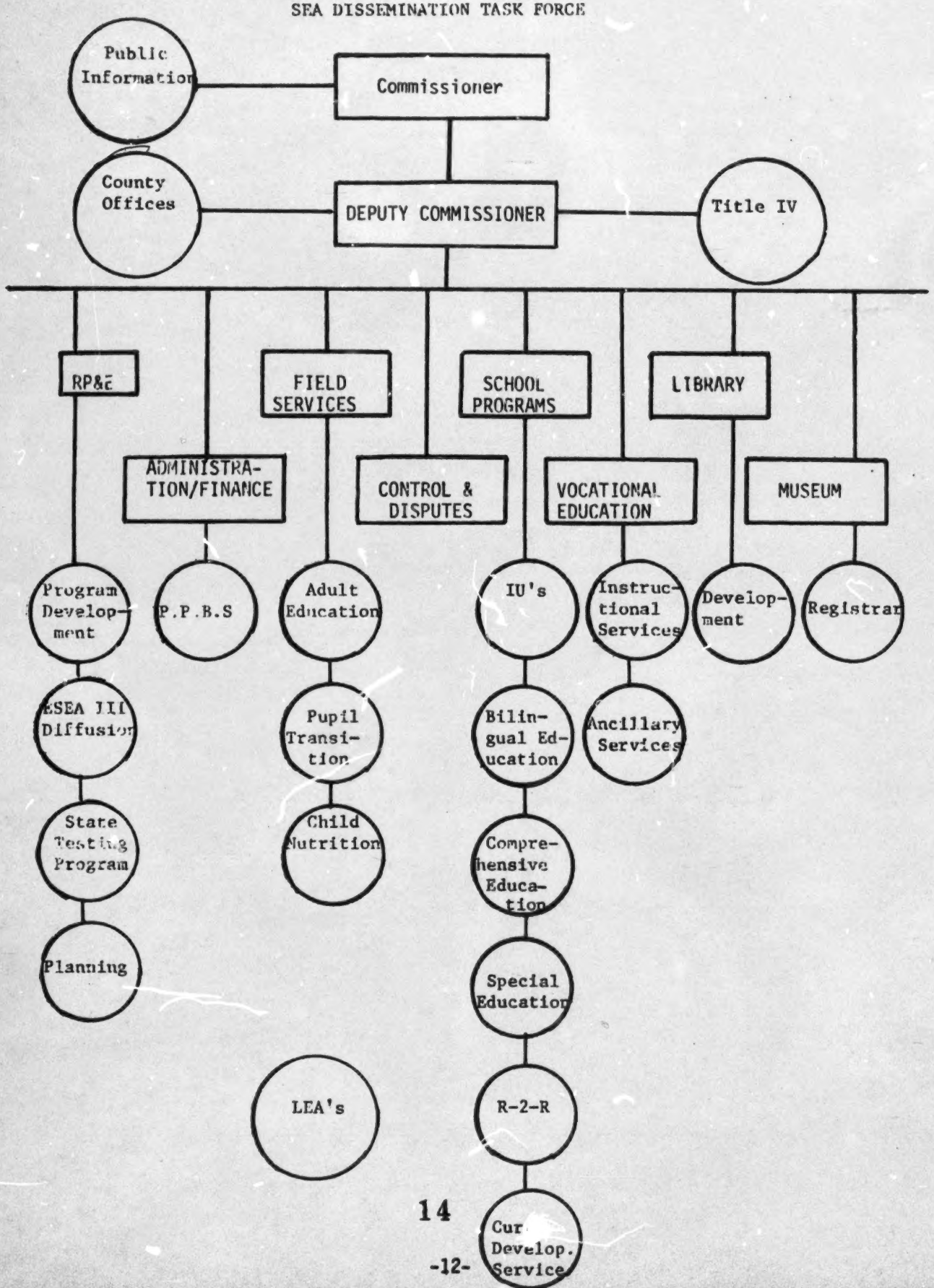

Table I

SYSTEMS ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

I.	PROGRAM OR INTERMEDIATE UNIT IDENTIFICATION
II.	DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES
III.	TYPES OF PROGRAMS, PRODUCTS OR INFORMATION
IV.	DATA COLLECTION AND RETRIEVAL PROCESSES
V.	PRINCIPLE REQUESTORS OR RECIPIENTS OF INFORMATION
VI.	AWARENESS, INVOLVEMENT OR COMMITMENT LEVEL ACTIVITIES
VII.	DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITY AREAS ADDRESSED

The major problem identified by the systems analysis was that the many dissemination activities and resources were uncoordinated within the agency. Communication among the several individuals and units engaged in dissemination was inadequate or non-existent. In addition, the provision of technical assistance services to local school district personnel was duplicative at several levels within the agency and in the Education Improvement Centers, New Jersey's intermediate service agencies. As a result of the systems analysis, a plan was developed for strengthening the intermediate unit system and coordinating information and incentive resources to respond to local school district needs.

At the state level, needs to which the dissemination system must respond are identified through an analysis of several data sources including those in such categorical programs as Special Education, Vocational Education and Urban Education and through the New Jersey Educational Assessment Program. The latter

program produces data by representative grade levels (4, 7, and 10) in two basic skill areas (reading and mathematics) for the state as a whole, as well as by county, community-type, local district, school building, and individual student. In its third year of operation, a total of 900,000 public school students were tested.

Quantative data, derived from these various assessment and categorical programs, provided additional measures of current status with respect to the desired outcomes specified by statewide educational goals. A review of the assessment results was undertaken by the Chief State School Officer and SEA staff in order to identify and prioritize critical educational needs for the State. A local needs assessment, required by the "thorough and efficient" legislation, provides supplementary data on needs in the local school districts. Both state and local needs data are used to guide the development of information, linkage and incentive resources.

The Education Improvement Centers (EIC's) are New Jersey's primary technical assistance mechanism. Four EIC's, established as service arms of the New Jersey Department of Education, serve different geographical areas of the state. The EIC's are primarily service centers, providing awareness (newsletters, conferences, literature searches), involvement (demonstration, planning for adoption/adaptation), and commitment (training and consultation services) activities. EIC's are the central point of contact in a system which branches out to other dissemination agents and agencies in the nation.

EIC's are equipped with comprehensive educational information storage and retrieval facilities, making possible rapid responses to inquiries on a broad range of topics dealing with what's new and what's tried and proven in education

today, coming from within and outside the State of New Jersey. EIC staff provide personalized technical consultation services on numerous educational topics. These centers are charged with the identification, collection, and preparation of information for communication, through the completion of the following activities:

1. *Identifying and securing relevant computerized and manually accessed files of educational information, legislation, data and human resources.*

2. *Designing and constructing files on national, state and local effective or promising educational programs and practices.*

3. *Synthesizing information and preparing products and services which respond to an identified information need of an individual or group.*

4. *Directing information into relevant national education information files such as ERIC.*

5. *Identifying knowledge production needs.*

EIC's can link a local district with other districts, either within New Jersey or anywhere else in the United States, whose experience and products can be helpful in meeting the needs of a local "consumer" district. The major objective of this linkage function is to establish and maintain a communication and assistance network between SEA and LEA's, and among practitioners. EIC staff perform routinely the following linkage activities:

1. *Providing consultative services to local educators for assistance in problem identification, problem solving and information utilization.*

2. *Providing for demonstrations of effective or promising practices to educators.*

3. *Providing training services and consultative assistance to local educators to enable them to implement effective programs and practices.*

4. *Assisting local educators in communicating among themselves.*

5. *Creating a capacity for continued information seeking and self-renewal.*

While each EIC is oriented to the needs of its region and operates under an annual program plan, each unit makes provision for three kinds of response activities.

1. General Needs Based Initiation Activities

In responding to client needs, it is not necessary to operate solely on individual client initiative. General local data and state priority data can be examined and regional priorities set. Potential programs and processes can be identified and the full range of dissemination activities can be initiated. Since responding to individual requests, particularly the same request from different clients, is exceedingly inefficient, it is essential for an EIC to become proficient in determining in advance the needs of its clients. Both dissemination and development activities may be employed by an EIC to accommodate a needs-based SEA initiation model.

2. Local Response Activities

Responding to local requests for assistance requires a complete range of activities. It requires ability in assisting districts to identify the specific nature of the problems, determining objectives of assistance, strategy planning, development of unique solutions, or adaption of existing solutions and evaluation. The role of the process consultant who is responsible for these functions is to link the individual needs of the client and the generalized products of the R&D community. This model implies the provision of the following services for the LEA: problem articulation and identification of needs, determination of process and operational objectives, strategy development and planning including searches of the produced delivery system bank, and a unique development and evaluation effort should no appropriate program be identified.

3. Special Needs Districts

Experience has shown that EIC's can be kept more than 100% occupied by responding to local client needs and initiating activities based on the generally identified needs of the region. However, experience has also shown that those districts most in need of improvement may need a disproportionate amount of resources directed to them in order to make the significant changes required. For this reason, each EIC plan must make special provisions in their activities in terms of response and initiating activities for the critical need districts in their regions.

All EIC's conduct an annual needs assessment of the region to determine specific areas in which it should work. EIC's also respond to research and development needs of local public and parochial schools. An assessment of accom-

plishment is conducted at the end of the year and appears as a special report to the SEA. All three response modes are summarized graphically in Figure 2.

In coordinating and providing incentives to support the dissemination system, the New Jersey Department of Education has developed a broad-based support system linked to national as well as state and local resources. Of course, the legislation requiring local district planning and program implementation serves as a substantial motivation for districts to develop improvement plans.

In New Jersey, the SEA school improvement services have two functions: 1) to provide for the coordination and backup of the EIC units; and, 2) as a major R&D unit, to contribute needed processes and products to the national and state pool or bank of processes and products. To fulfill this mandate to serve as a major R&D unit, the SEA has established a systematic response mechanism.

Needs data flowing from statewide testing, educational audit, and special service programs such as Title I and Vocational are analyzed to identify school improvement needs. These needs are then identified in priority order. Existing R&D products and processes are reviewed to determine whether the needs can be met or whether new development is needed.

RFP's are produced in areas of developmental need. In the development process, the SEA works closely with LEA personnel in districts having a critical need. Each development follows the general pattern of plan development, process/product development, field testing and evaluation, and validation. Validation is considered an important form of consumer protection. Validated programs are reviewed for dissemination potential. In some cases, projects become developer/demonstration sites providing a full range of dissemination activities directly

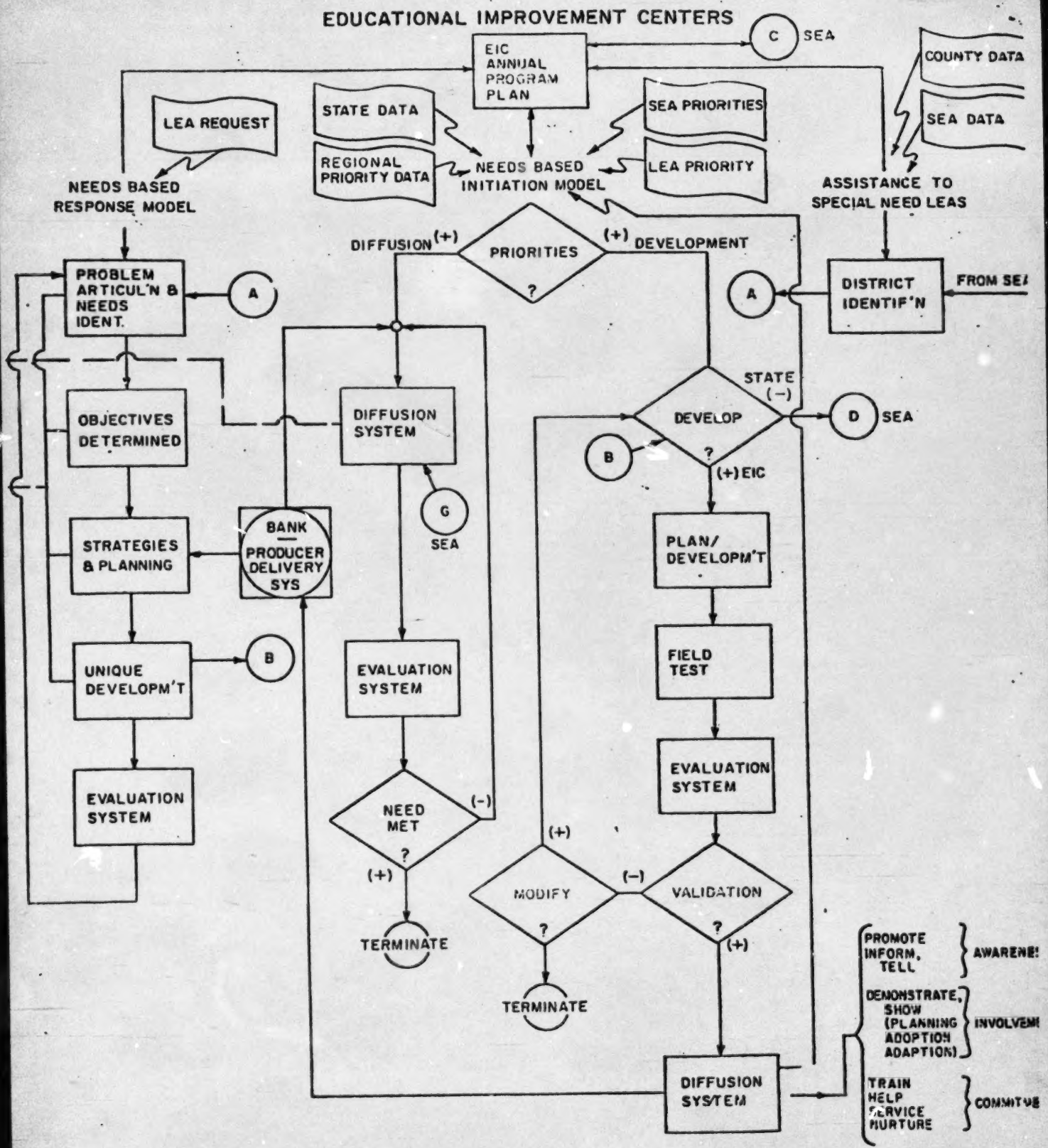
EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT CENTERS
C
SEA
EIC ANNUAL PROGRAM PLAN
COUNTY DATA
SEA DATA
LEA REQUEST
STATE DATA
REGIONAL PRIORITY DATA
NEEDS BASED INITIATION MODEL
SEA PRIORITIES
LEA PRIORITY
NEEDS BASED RESPONSE MODEL
ASSISTANCE TO SPECIAL NEED LEAS
DIFFUSION (+)
PRIORITIES
?
(+) DEVELOPMENT
PROBLEM ARTICUL'N & NEEDS IDENT.
A
A
DISTRICT IDENTIF'N
FROM SEA
OBJECTIVES DETERMINED
DIFFUSION SYSTEM
STATE (-)
DEVELOP
D
SEA
B
?
(+) EIC
G
SEA
BANK — PRODUCER DELIVERY SYS
STRATEGIES & PLANNING
PLAN/ DEVELOPM'T
UNIQUE DEVELOPM'T
B
EVALUATION SYSTEM
FIELD TEST
EVALUATION SYSTEM
EVALUATION SYSTEM
NEED MET
?
(-)
(+)
(+)
MODIFY
?
(-)
VALIDATION
?
(+)
TERMINATE
TERMINATE
PROMOTE INFORM, TELL
AWARENE
DEMONSTRATE, SHOW (PLANNING ADOPTION ADAPTION)
INVOLVEM
TRAIN HELP SERVICE NURTURE
COMMITME
DIFFUSION SYSTEM

Figure 2

to interested LEA's, both in New Jersey and out of state. In other cases, only the materials of a project will be made available either through a commercial publisher or through SEA or EIC. The final step in the development process is the evaluation of the dissemination of the process/product including the student effects and cost factors in a sample of LEA adopters or adapters.

The New Jersey dissemination system requires access to a multiplicity of R&D process/products. It would be impossible for the New Jersey R&D effort to produce all of the process/products identified as needed by the LEA's; therefore, it is imperative that the SEA be able to facilitate the impact of programs from a nationwide pool of R&D process/products. In return, New Jersey has an obligation to make available its programs to clients throughout the country. The National Facilitator Project of USOE is considered one source for this SEA function; however, dissemination has been limited by USOE policy to the programs approved by the Joint Dissemination and Review Panel and funded by USOE. While the results of the intrastate exchange have been encouraging, New Jersey districts have shown great interest in out-of-state projects. EIC personnel have been trained as turnkey trainees in several programs and more than 50 districts working through the New Jersey linkers have adapted/adopted out-of-state programs.

During the past ten years, a great deal has been learned about developing programs which are successful in meeting the needs of local educators. However, strategy development in the successful and efficient dissemination of process/products to meet widespread needs is in its infancy. The research of such fields as communications, sociology, economics, and psychology must be examined continously for clues in developing sophisticated adoption/adaption strategies. It remains unlikely that total adoption of discrete programs by consumer districts

can be effective on a large scale. This fact underscores the importance of maintaining the information, incentives, and linkage functions of the regionally based technical assistance centers.

Managing the wide range of dissemination activities and resources has been facilitated through the development of the EIC system. Dissemination planning has been integrated into the SEA macro-planning system. Through the dissemination task force, the following objectives have been established for improving the management of the dissemination system.

1. *To develop operational plans for the dissemination system which specify objectives, personnel, timelines, products and costs.*

2. *To coordinate the day-to-day operations of the dissemination system components.*

3. *To develop and use appropriate communication channels for identifying local needs for knowledge, programs, or practices.*

4. *To design and implement dissemination activities appropriate to the needs of the local school district.*

5. *To evaluate the products and services of the dissemination system.*

6. *To coordinate dissemination operations with related SEA functions and activities.*

7. *To establish and maintain communication with appropriate agencies and organizations external to the SEA.*

While major efforts are under way for each of these objectives, the task force viewed these as on-going requirements for dissemination system management.

In order to maximize the effects of meeting the needs of LEA's through dissemination, SEA management needs to consider collaborative relationships with agencies not directly under its control. These agencies such as teacher associations, colleges and universities, civic groups, etc., have their own goals. The SEA cannot expect that these agencies will modify their goals to conform to SEA goals and priorities. However, there frequently exist areas of goal and priority congruence in limited areas between agencies. For example, the teachers' association may have a goal of improving reading instruction through teacher workshops. The SEA may also have a priority in the area of reading improvement. The SEA may be able to help identify programs and expertise for the workshops, and the teachers' association may underwrite the cost of the sessions. There are many instances when collaborative planning and implementation could be mutually beneficial to both the SEA and other agencies. However, such collaborative efforts will not take place with any regularity unless it is identified as an SEA function and responsibility assigned.

In order to meet the school improvement demands of modern education, the R&D dissemination capacity must stretch beyond the state. The national R&D capacity includes NIE, USOE, colleges, universities, regional labs, foundations, and independent researchers. Since the New Jersey Department of Education has no direct control over this nationwide system, it must rely on negotiating for its needs with any of these agencies. Some of the functions of the national R&D system are:

1. Funding of R&D activities at SEA and LEA level
2. Identification of successful programs based on standard procedures
3. Basic research
4. Development of process/products based on standard procedures
5. Coordination between SEA's in specific areas

It is necessary for the SEA to make specific provisions for tying into this national effort. Figure 3 presents these relationships schematically. Obviously, the complexity and importance of these extra-state linkages requires a coordinated management component for the dissemination system.

SUMMARY

In New Jersey the IPOD planning framework has formed the basis for the identification of existing and needed dissemination activities and resources and has facilitated their integration in a state education agency system responsive to practitioners at the local school district level. By establishing a comprehensive dissemination planning capability and conducting an agencywide analysis, the New Jersey Department of Education has accomplished the following:

1. Assessed the characteristics of current SEA dissemination activities
2. Developed a communication system within the SEA whereby key agents or units can share and plan dissemination activities and resources
3. Developed a dissemination model
4. Identified implementation strategies for the dissemination model
5. Evaluated the products and services of current dissemination components.

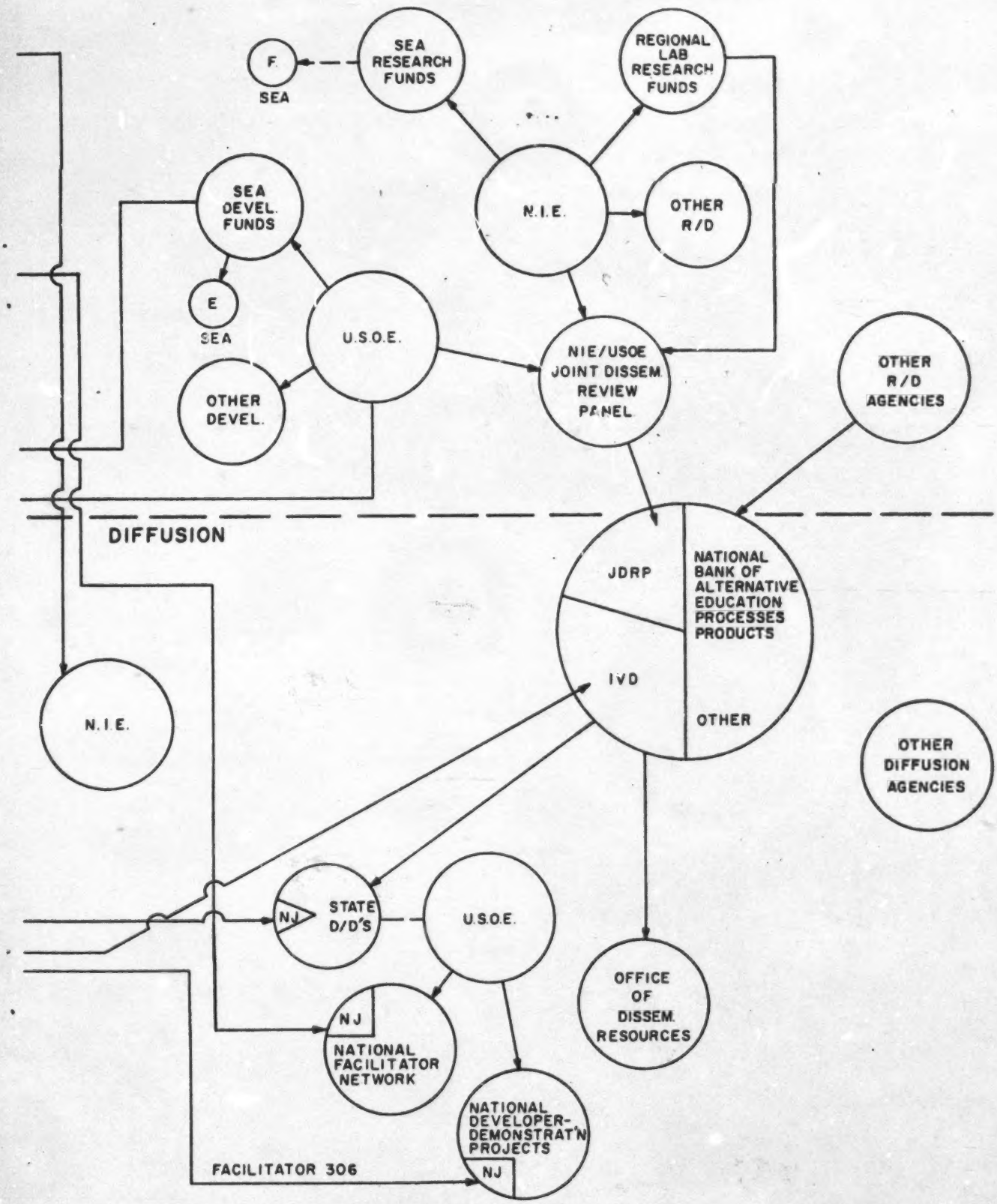

Figure 3

26

Extra-state Relationships

As a result of New Jersey's experience in the use of the planning framework, it was found that the macro-planning system was effective in the coordination and management of the diverse dissemination resources in the SEA. The IPOD framework rests on the assumption that few state education agencies organize their dissemination activities and resources in a systematic way and that such a mode of organization would do much to advance educational improvement in schools and classrooms. The framework offers a guide or template for adapting what exists in theory and practice to the specific characteristics and needs of each SEA. The New Jersey experience indicates that the planning framework is useful for this process.